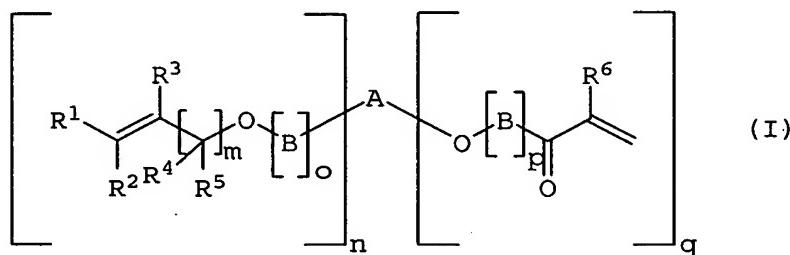


IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A (meth)acrylic ester of an alkoxylated unsaturated polyol ether of the a general formula ± (I)



where wherein

R¹, R², R³, R⁴, and R⁵ are each independently hydrogen or C₁ to C₆ alkyl, of which C₃ to C₆ alkyl may be branched or unbranched,

R⁶ is hydrogen or methyl,

m is an integer from 0 to 10,

n is an integer from 1 to 5,

o is an integer from 0 to 100,

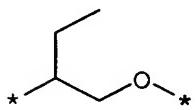
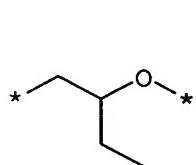
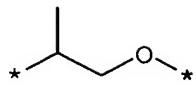
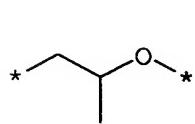
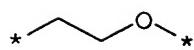
p is an integer from 2 to 100,

q is an integer from 1 to 5 and ,

A is C₃ to C₂₀alk(n+q)yl or C₃ to C₂₀ hetero-alk(n+q)yl,

the wherein a sum total of n and q is an integer from 3 to 10, and

B represents identical or different radicals selected from the group consisting of



where wherein * identifies the positions of attachment.

2. (Currently amended) The (meth)acrylic ester of an alkoxylated unsaturated polyol ether of the general formula I according to claim 1 where wherein

R^1 , R^2 , R^3 , R^4 , and R^5 are each hydrogen,

R^6 is hydrogen or methyl,

m is 0 or 1,

n is an integer from 1 to 3,

o is an integer from 0 to 20,

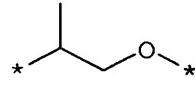
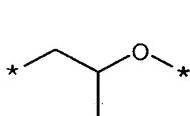
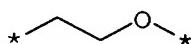
p is an integer from 3 to 40,

q is an integer from 1 to 3, and

A is C_3 to C_{10} alk(n+q)yl,

wherein the sum total of n and q is an integer from 3 to 5, and

B represents identical or different radicals selected from the group consisting of



wherein * identifies the positions of attachment.

3. (Currently amended) The (meth)acrylic ester of an alkoxylated unsaturated polyol ether of the general formula I according to claim 1 where wherein

R^1 , R^2 , R^3 , R^4 , and R^5 are each hydrogen,

R^6 is hydrogen or methyl,

m is 1,

n is 1 or 2,

o is 0,

p is an integer from 5 to 20,

q is 1 or 2,

A is C_3 to C_6 alkyl(n+q)yl,

wherein the sum total of n and q is 3, and

B is 

wherein * identifies the positions of attachment.

4. (Currently amended) A process for preparing ~~the a~~ (meth)acrylic ester of an alkoxyolated unsaturated polyol ether according to any of claims claim 1 to 3, comprising the steps of

- a) reacting the alkoxyolated unsaturated polyether with (meth)acrylic acid in the presence of at least one esterification catalyst, ~~and of~~ at least one polymerization inhibitor, and optionally ~~of~~ a water-azeotroping solvent to form the (meth)acrylic ester of the unsaturated polyol ether,
- b) optionally removing from the reaction mixture some or all of the water formed in a), during and/or after a),
- c) optionally neutralizing the reaction mixture, and
- d) when a solvent ~~was is~~ used, optionally removing ~~this the~~ solvent.

5. (Currently amended) A swellable hydrogel-forming polymer comprising a copolymerized ~~internal crosslinker~~ (meth)acrylic ester of the general formula I according to claim 1 to 3 as an internal crosslinker.

6. (Currently amended) A process for preparing a crosslinked swellable hydrogel-forming polymer according to claim 5, which comprises polymerizing an aqueous mixture comprising a hydrophilic monomer, optionally at least one further monoethylenically unsaturated compound, at least one (meth)acrylic ester of an alkoxyated unsaturated polyol ethers ether of general formula (I) of claim 1, at least one free-radical initiator, and optionally also at least one grafting base, and optionally the reaction mixture hydrogel-forming polymer obtained being postcrosslinked, dried, and brought to the a desired particle size.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently amended) A hygiene article comprising a crosslinked swellable hydrogel-forming polymer according to of claim 5.

9. (New) A swellable hydrogel-forming polymer comprising a copolymerized (meth)acrylic ester of general formula (I) according to claim 2 as an internal crosslinker.

10. (New) A swellable hydrogel-forming polymer comprising a copolymerized (meth)acrylic ester of general formula (I) according to claim 3 as an internal crosslinker.

11. (New) A hygiene article comprising a crosslinked swellable hydrogel-forming polymer of claim 9.

12. (New) A hygiene article comprising a crosslinked swellable hydrogel-forming polymer of claim 10.